

The Christian Freeman.

A MONTHLY UNITARIAN JOURNAL.

DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS, MORAL, AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

No. 7.—VOL. XIV.]

JULY, 1870.

[PRICE 1½d.

THE TRIALS OF MICHEL ANDRE.

BY BEATRICE A. JOURDAN.

PART II.

"Marie, you are good and noble!" I said. "I—ah! no. But what am I to do? The priest shut his door against me, for he will have it that I am out of my mind, and my cousins say the same. Oh, if you had but let me break that image, they would have believed me then; and I—oh! what happiness—should have been imprisoned, and perhaps been put to death. I cannot live as I am now. But never mind, it will not be for long—no, I feel it will not be for long."

Thus she talked on somewhat wildly, until we reached her dwelling. Her good relations were standing upon the doorstep looking out for her anxiously, for it was now quite dark. "Where have you been?" they cried. "Fie, fie, Marie! to be wandering about the streets in the rain, while you are so ill, too?" "Ill! are you ill, mademoiselle?" I said. She bent her head, and her two cousins, looking at me, whispered, "Who is that beggar-man?" "An old acquaintance," said Marie, boldly; and I saw by the light of a candle which one of her cousins held, that she reddened a little. But, ah! she looked ill, exceeding ill—I perceived that now. And after the house-door had closed upon me, shutting her out from my sight, I covered my face with my hands, thinking of her words, "It will not be for long."

From that time, sir, I could scarce keep myself away from the house where she dwelt, but did frequently wander up and down in front of it, passionately desiring to see her again. At last, to my amazement, her cousins themselves invited me in. She had told them who I was, and their love for her being stronger even than their bigotry, they hoped that the sight of

me might haply restore her to health. "She had caught cold," they said, "the night she was out in the rain, and this had increased the sickness from which she before had been suffering. She was, besides, a little melancholy; and perhaps it would do her good to see an old friend, only I must be sure to be very cheerful." Cheerful, alas! it was a hard matter for me to be cheerful, sir, especially when I saw her. She was sitting at a casement window, with her head resting on her hand, and her eyes fixed sadly on the sky. For a little moment she turned towards me, and then again gazed upward—not hopefully, but, as it were, in utter weariness. "Ah! Michel," she said, when, on some pretext, her cousins had left us alone, "if your good father were alive!" "My father!" I cried, scarce pleased that she should think of him just then. "Yes," she said, "he charged me to keep you faithful; *you*, he thought that you were weak, and I—. Oh! but Michel, it was very hard! They shut me up in a convent, and harassed me day and night till I said I would conform to their faith, and for five years—for five years—I have played the part of a devout Catholic; but I was very miserable, and when I met you on the bridge, and saw your eyes, and thought of your good father, Michel, I could have killed myself if I dared! Michel, if you would but prevail on them to imprison me now! I will bear any suffering gladly—I wish to suffer, Michel!" At this I could but shake my head, and tell her, "nay, it was not so, or else she would endure with greater patience the suffering which had come to her through remorse;" and then, in my poor way, I began to speak to her of the Father's mercy and compassion, growing warm upon the theme, until at last her eyes turned towards me, and

there gathered in them a few quiet tears. She who at times had almost despised me because I could not dive like her into the deep matters of election and reprobation, now listened to me docile as a little child. But the wound was past my healing, sir; and though I came many times to visit her (being let in secretly by a back door) I could not bind up the heart that was broken. Her cousins favoured my coming, knowing that I could soothe her better than they, and she herself was content to see me always, though only as a friend, only as one to whom she could speak of her grief and penitence. I began even to wonder whether indeed she had ever loved me, but of this I at length was well assured. One day, when her kind relations were telling me joyfully they were convinced she was better, because she had the night before caught some snatches of sleep, she, with a shake of the head, said, "Ah, you make much of a little, I heard the cathedral clock strike every hour betwixt matins and vespers; nevertheless, I must have dreamt a few seconds, I suppose, for, Michel, I once fancied myself to be again in our dear old church which we so deeply loved." At mention of this said church her cousins frowned, and fidgetted with their feet; but she continued boldly, "I thought, Michel, I was going to hear your father preach, but looking up I found that some one else was standing in the pulpit, though it was so dark I could not discover whether it was you or no." "Then was it strangely unlike itself," I said, "in the day time the church was exceeding light." "Ah! yes; and at certain seasons of the year, the afternoon sunlight used, streaming in, to cast your shadow on the wall when you were standing up to preach." "And my father's, too, when he was preaching, I suppose?" I said, smiling. "Ah! doubtless, but I did not notice his. Michel," and she spoke now in a softer tone, "I used to gaze on that shadow and think it was yours—yours, none but yours; and being yours, I needs must love it. Ah, Michel, do not laugh at me for my folly." I was little likely to laugh, was I, sir, at that which brought great joy to my heart? I understood her now — her seeming coldness sprang only from the depth of her remorse, which had, so to speak, drowned within her all other feelings. Naught but her

exceeding sickness prevented her from publicly disowning the faith which, in her heart, she held in an abhorrence that seemed to me un-Christian. Did I not put myself in peril by visiting her? Assuredly. Had I been discovered my doom would have been death. But what would my love have been worth—aye, or my charity as a Christian—if thought of danger had had with me a feather's weight? She did not think so meanly of me as to suppose it would; and as for the sufferings I had borne, she only envied me for them. Now and then, if I chanced to push back my sleeve, I would see her looking mournfully at the mark left on my wrist by the chafing of the galley-chain, and, with a shake of her head, she would say, "Happy Michel, to be able to bear about with you so honourable a badge!"

As she grew weaker her cousins became less willing I should visit her, but learning through a maid servant that she earnestly desired to see me, I one morning almost forced my way into her presence; and then, sir, then I saw that the last great change was drawing near. She sat, as heretofore, in a high-backed chair by the window; but her head rested on a pillow now—she could no longer support it with her hand. A red spot burned on either cheek, and a false lustre lit up her large black eyes. "Michel," she said, "the priest has been here, and I went down on my knees before him; they bade me not, but I would, and prayed him to forgive me for having deceived him, and told him again most solemnly all I had told him before." "Then, sure, you must be easy now," I answered; "but did he believe you?" "No; he will have it I am not altogether in my right senses. And he is coming to-morrow; he says he *will* come to-morrow to bring me the sacraments. Michel, what does that mean? am I dying?" "No, no!" cried her cousins; but I was silent, and she believed my face more than their words. "I thought I was—I hoped I was," she murmured; "if only I could be sure I should go to Heaven!"

She could not bear that I should leave her; and her good cousins suffered me to tarry in the house, under the condition that if the priest came, I should on no account show myself. At intervals during the day and the long night that followed, I took part in watching beside my Marie,

who remained still in the same posture, except that she no longer gazed, or seemed to gaze, at the sky. She did not speak much, yet at times would question me wistfully as to whether I deemed her worthy to go to Heaven, meaning to a place where her bliss would at once be perfect; but when I ventured at last to tell her that wherever she might be, she would assuredly be in God's keeping, and that this ought to content her, since He knew best, she—though in former days such teaching would have seemed to her as heresy—took great comfort therefrom, expressing herself willing to suffer even for her faults, if such seemed good in her Father's sight. As the night wore on, she somewhat wandered in her mind, and confusing me, as it appeared, with my father, asked if the pastor were coming, to which I answered, "Not yet, but soon." "Very soon?" she said. "Yes, yes, my beloved," I replied, "to you very soon." For, sir, I thought not of any poor weak earthly pastor, but of the one good Pastor—the good Shepherd—who had given his life for the sheep. At sunrise she started up suddenly, gasping out my name. Her cousins were by her side in a moment, but I, pushing them aside—I fear something rudely—said, "Me, me! she calls for me," and put my arm round her, so that she could lean her head upon my shoulder. Opposite the window the red sun rose, his bright beams falling full upon her face, but I think they did not trouble her now, and that her cousins had no need to screen them, as they tried to do, from her failing eyes. Yet she knew that I was near her, and as I bent over her, weeping silently, and calling her again and again, "My beloved," I caught the words, "Peace, peace,—peace now,—happy!" Sir, she never spoke again, and when the priest came, hoping to administer to her the last sacraments of his Church, she was at "peace" indeed.

Yes, 'tis a sad story; but she is safe with Him unto whom all live, and, as for myself, I—even at the first—could not deeply grieve that she should be taken from me; it was such joy to me to think that she suffered no more. After her burial (the Catholics claimed her as their own, and laid her in consecrated ground) I did not care to tarry long at Lyons, where my life was not safe. Donning again my beggar's garb—which I had in

part discarded—I travelled northward on foot, and, at length fell in with a young English nobleman, who was returning to his native country after a short sojourn at Paris. I will not tell his name, for he is living yet, and does not wish his good deeds to be known; but this I may say, that to him I confided my story, and that he not only suffered me to accompany him to England disguised as one of his livery servants, but has since greatly befriended me, though I must needs own that he showed me some displeasure because I would not live upon his bounty, preferring rather to support myself by teaching. But I am past work now, and so am come to settle in this quiet nook, hoping to end my days in peace. And I am the person you took me for, sir? and—and—do I hear you aright? it was *me* you were thinking of when you spoke of the "noble army of martyrs?"—ah, sure it couldn't have been *me*! True, I did bear something for conscience sake, but not in a martyr's spirit at all. Well, well, it may be as you say—the martyrs were but men, and they may at times have been cast down like me; yes, and have murmured even, as, to my shame, I own I murmured; and the fire and the cruel rack, which so exalt them in our eyes, did seem to them, perhaps, no whit more glorious than my galley chain appeared to me; but still to count me as one of them is mockery almost! I beg pardon, I'm old and stupid, and do not understand your meaning quite. You say, if you may not think of me in the "Te Deum," you shall at least when the "Song of the Three Children" is sung instead. Why, sir, why? Do I remember the last verse but one of the Song? I think so. "Ye holy and humble men of heart, praise ye the Lord." That is it, is it not? But I do not see—oh, sir, must you still flatter an old man? "Holy!" no, no, I am not that; but "humble"—hearted I trust I may be. I have need to be, I am sure.

WHY CALL YOURSELF UNITARIAN?—(1) Because I like to give a plain answer to a plain question. (2) Because no other name so clearly defines my religious position. (3) Because I care to have a character for honesty, while I do not care a button about being regarded as heretical. (4) Because some men who are Unitarians shrink from the name as it is not yet popular. (5) Because I aim to make both the thing and the name, UNITARIAN, popular.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

SEVERAL years ago, writes a minister living near the Baltic, the son of a religious woman became a sailor. The daily prayers of his mother accompanied him on his dangerous voyages. One evening, a short while ago, the sea grew very rough, the storm blew from the north-west, and the mother, who lived on the coast, felt an inexplicable, nameless anxiety for her son, although she did not know if he was on the sea that evening. She began to pray, and the prayer often rose to loud cries.

Her husband, who was not exactly without feeling the power of prayer, but of a rougher nature, grew at last impatient, and said he thought there had been enough of that noise, since she did not even know if their son was out that evening. The mother became silent, but continued praying in her heart, until she fell asleep.

In the same night the ship on which the son of this pious woman served as a sailor passed by this very coast. As the storm was greatly increasing, the captain ordered this sailor, with another of his crew, to reef the main top-sail. After the former had offered up a short prayer, he mounted the rope ladder with his companion. But the sailor had hardly reached the top, when, as the ship was leaning to one side, the point of the mast broke, and with the cry of "Oh, my God, help me!" he fell off into the raging ocean. The captain's cry of "Man overboard!" called the ship's crew together. They threw, in the darkness, ropes into the water to help the poor sailor. All in vain; no more was seen of him.

"A great pity for the brave fellow!" cried the captain; "he is lost!" But, behold, scarcely had he spoken, when a tremendous wave rose up behind the ship, and as it swept over the deck, it threw the apparently dead body of the poor sailor almost at the captain's feet. He was picked up, carried into the cabin; life was still in him; they rubbed him, and although his body was much bruised he soon revived, and is sailing again to-day, well and thankful to his God for His unspeakable mercy. It may be as another proof of his thankfulness to his Maker, that since then he sends, through the owner of the vessel, half of his wages to his poor parents. This is for the poor and now sick woman very great help. Possibly the sailor in falling off the mast may have grasped a rope, and

desperately held on to it until the wave threw him back on the ship. The mercy of God is not lessened by that. But I was particularly touched by the incident, when I learned from the captain, a very well informed seaman, that this took place just opposite the home of the parents.

HOME TEACHING.

WHILE Parliament is still discussing how much or how little religious instruction the schoolmaster is to be allowed in future to give, and when those who call themselves the teachers of religion seem strangely anxious that others, and not themselves, should have the responsibility of making the people religious, it is as well to remind ourselves that, after all, *that* which for the most part gives to children the deepest and most enduring religious or irreligious impression is the teaching and example of their parents at home, and in very early life. No formal reading of the Bible in school, with or without explanations from the schoolmaster, and no learning of catechisms and creeds imposed by a minister or clergyman—no attendance at services, or listening to sermons—make upon the minds of young children as lasting an impression as the lessons learnt at home through the example, the words, and the characters of their parents. Fathers and mothers may know little of Biblical history—may not even be great readers of the Bible, and may have forgotten the creeds and catechisms they learned in their youth. They may take little interest in the varieties of religious opinions, and have no very decided belief in one religious dogma as compared with another; and yet all this time they may be quite capable of giving for life the best basis for a religious character to their children. First of all, they may, without any of these things, show by their words and actions that they have a strong and abiding sense of an overruling Providence, and a grateful sense of God's mercy and lovingkindness; and this they cannot but impart to their children when once they accustom themselves to consider them a solemn trust from God. When parents feel that on their own words and actions the goodness of their child depends, and that it is in their own power to inspire a reverence for God and what is good, and to give to their child a habit of recognising and acknowledging the mercy of God,

and a fear of acting at variance with His laws and commands, they have made their children religious for life. Very common is it to hear from the man or woman who has been remarkable for a religious character in life :—"I received my first religious impressions from my mother," or "my father," as the case may be ; and while it too often happens that the Bible —when made a lesson-book, and read in class in a formal manner—becomes wearisome, unintelligible, and, for the most part, unimpressive to children, when read by a parent, and associated in the mind with the joys of home and childhood, it is cherished and valued in after life, and its lessons remembered with tender reverence and respect. But it is by no means through the reading of the Bible alone that a parent has the means of inculcating religious lessons, or of giving the best and most lasting religious impression. A father or mother who looks into the mind of a child, and sees its capacity for good, as well as its tendency to evil, can make the little events of everyday life in its very earliest years the means of drawing out that good and checking that evil. How early, for instance, can a parent inculcate in children a regard for the comfort and happiness of others—in other words, teach the Christian law of "loving their neighbours as themselves?" They can render their children forbearing and just to one another ; and, above all, they can inculcate the habit of obedience to themselves. No grown up man or woman is likely to be obedient to the laws of God who is not first taught, as a child, the habit of obedience to the commands of its own earthly parents. All true religiousness is, in fact, nothing more or less than the submissive attitude of mind towards that which is above us. Recognition of "our Father in heaven" as the author of our lives, and the source of all our blessings, and the obedience and submission to His will and decrees, in the readiness to say, "Thy will be done." A mother, when she is opposed by her child in carrying out what she considers necessary for it, should remember, above all things, to be firm in enforcing what she knows to be right, looking upon her own knowledge of the right as the form in which God's will is presented to it. A child cries when it has to be washed, unaware that the operation of washing is the

result of the parent's knowledge of what is best for its physical health ; but if the mother firmly enforces the daily washing, in spite of resistance and cries, there arises gradually a comprehension in the mind of the child that a law, never to be evaded or avoided, is being carried out, although it may be very many years before it knows why cleanliness and the action of cold water on the skin is a benefit. A mother forbids a child to touch a certain article of food, and withholds it, in spite of cries and entreaties on the part of the child—rendered firm by her knowledge of its hurtfulness, and giving, instead, what is wholesome and good—and even the youngest child soon learns that its parent is obeying a hidden rule of right. Not only is thus a moral law shown to be the guide of conduct, but intimately connected with religious feelings is such obedience. Especially is it in the power of the parent to inculcate truthfulness through the little incidents of a child's daily life. Once having said, "Do this," a parent, careful of the moral and religious training of the child, must enforce the command ; and once having threatened a punishment, must, at any cost to the child or self, enforce that punishment, if it be rightly incurred. The habit of threatening punishment which it is never intended to carry out is one of the most demoralising proceedings on the part of a parent. The laws of God and nature can never be broken with impunity ; and this, parents should endeavour to make clear to a child's mind through the consistency of their own conduct. "If you are troublesome I shall not take you out to walk again with me," says the father to a turbulent boy. The child is troublesome, but the father, forgetting it, or without firmness to carry out his threat, takes the boy out again. The child is not dull of comprehension, and does not forget, but says to himself, "My father does not mean what he says, so I shall not mind him." No fathers or mothers who break their promises, who do not carry out their threats (taking care that the threat is something which can be carried out), who allow their children to perceive their weakness and want of truth, are in a position to enforce religious lessons on their children. No Sunday evening reading of the Bible, no reverence shown for the words of

Scripture, can fix the best and truest religious principles in the mind of the child, if in the mind and conduct of the parent is absent a pious reverence for truth. However the present discussions may terminate as to the amount of religious instruction to be given by the schoolmaster during school hours, we would earnestly advise all parents to accept gratefully all such instruction as shall make their children well-versed in the contents of the Bible. They cannot know too much of the simple and touching narratives it contains ; they cannot be too familiar with the personages of Scripture history, and all that the Bible tells us of the countries and peoples among whom first dawned the knowledge of the one God. They cannot learn too many of the lessons taught by Jesus of Nazareth, nor retain in their memories too many of his words, nor know too much of the incidents of his life. Let them learn all this from others. But let all parents be conscious that the privilege and duty rest with themselves of giving to their children their religious education in the truest and fullest meaning of the words. Let them teach them and train them religiously at home.

BABOO KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

A PERSONAL SKETCH BY AN INDIAN.

As I have known the Baboo for a great number of years, the readers of the CHRISTIAN FREEMAN may be glad to hear from me a few particulars of his life.

Mr. Sen has descended from one of the well-known Hindoo families in Calcutta. The family to which he belongs has been long known to the local Government as trustworthy and noble, and owing to this many persons of his family still hold very high posts under the Government. His family is also renowned for their superior education. His grandfather was a very learned Sanscrit and English scholar, and edited a good vocabulary, which was once considered to have been the most useful book for disseminating English knowledge among the Hindoos. Having descended from what is called a Hindoo orthodox family, Keshub Chunder Sen at an early age imbibed all the superstitious views of the religion of his family. He then practised many heathen ceremonies ; in fine, took great pleasure in the observance of

idolatrous religious rites. Gradually, as he advanced in his collegiate career, his mind began to take a different mould of thought, and he seriously felt the fallibility of the Hindoo religion, but he did not take up till then anything positive to fix his faith in. The spirit of inquiry about religion grew more and more ; and he strongly felt that he required something to satisfy his spiritual wants. Fortunately, when his mind was thus wandering about distracted by doubts on the Hindoo religion, and suffering under spiritual wants, he had retained a strong faith in the existence of ONE GOD, which prevented him from falling into utter scepticism. His faith in God being sufficiently confirmed, he began to pray earnestly to Him for the supply of his spiritual wants. Nobody instructed him to make prayer to God ; he was led to this, as it were, by some spiritual revelation. Here began the regeneration of his life. In the fulness of time his prayers were heard, and he became a devout worshipper of God.

The Baboo did not receive any very lengthened education in the college, having been obliged to discontinue his studies on account of an eye disease to which he was then a victim. Within a short time he got better of the disease by more constantly using spectacles. His ardent desire to become useful to mankind was a striking phenomenon of his character. He established a night school, where he became head master. He established literary clubs, where he took the chair as president. In play, in work, or in amusement, wherever he mixed he always was able to take the lead. Notwithstanding his eye disease, he could not resist the temptation of study, which was his favourite enjoyment. He read many works of mental philosophy. He then established a Sunday-school in connection with the Bramho Somaj, in which he had newly entered. He here delivered lectures on mental and moral philosophy for a period of three years. There was nothing about him at first to suppose that he would ever be an eloquent man. He was very shy in his early life — he could not speak before half a dozen men ; in every meeting he would take a private seat on a bench. But he increased his power of speech by his indefatigable exertions. He then began at last to speak in every meeting, and his

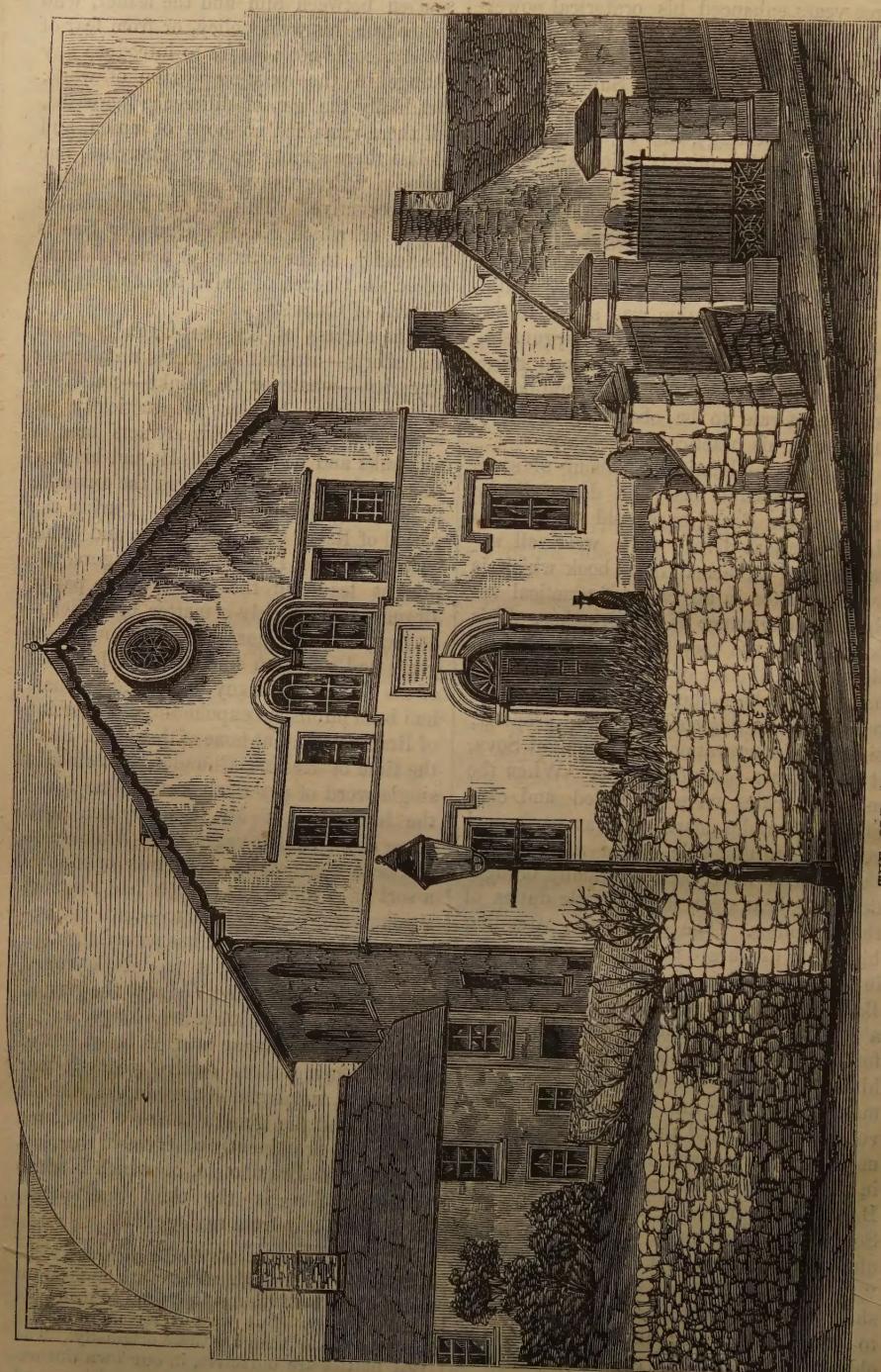
oral lectures in the Bramho School for three years enhanced his oratorical power to a great extent. His life of usefulness began with his labour in the Sunday-school. Simultaneously with the Sunday-school he established a society called Sungut Sova (a friendly meeting), the object of which was to establish brotherly union among its members, and the subjects discussed therein were purely of practical, moral, and religious character. The Sungut Sova was composed of some devoted and enthusiastic men, who were all inquirers after truth. Every practical question was sifted to the bottom, tested by philosophical argument, and then referred to the common sense for final corroboration, before it could be put down as a rule to be observed by every member in his practical life.

After the indefatigable labour of some years, the Sova at last laid down all the rules which Bramhos should observe in their practical lives; they were all arranged and published in a book which is now consulted in all cases of practical religious performance of the Bramhos. This book is now the very pith and marrow of the present theism of India. Bramhoism had hitherto been theoretical, but since the publication of this book, or, more properly, since the inauguration of the Sungut Sova, it has taken a practical shape. When the marriage rules were discussed and confirmed, Bramho marriage was performed according to that rule. The several rules thus formed have been gradually brought down to bear upon the domestic duties of the Bramhos. The ceremonies attending birth and death are now performed according to the rules of this book. Keshub Baboo, as we call him in India, now took a bold step, and began to examine every form of life by the rules of this book. He himself practised all the rules in his domestic and public life, and some of his devoted followers did the same. He could no more tolerate any idolatrous practices in the Bramho Somaj, and asked its leader, Baboo Debendro Nath Tagore, to give the Somaj a practical shape; and among other questions he urged that he who will wear "the sacred thread" (a relic of Hindooism) shall not be permitted to ascend the pulpit to conduct service; and as one of the oldest preachers wore the sacred thread, he objected to allow him to preach from the pulpit.

Imperceptibly but rapidly grew a disension between him and the leader, who either from his weak policy, or from fear of society, could not venture to introduce any change in the existing system of work. Gradually the gap of difference increased, till there remained no hope of union, and at last there sprang up two churches, one called "Progressive," and the other "Conservative." This led the Progressive party, of which Keshub Chunder Sen is the leader, to the erection of a new church, called the Church of India, the other is the Church of Calcutta.

The success of Keshub Chunder in all his efforts—attributable to his unfaltering sincerity—whatever he thinks—consciously thinks—he does it practically, at every risk. His sincerity attracts men of all ranks and persuasions. He and his few devoted followers first showed the example of breaking through idolatry. During the period of Rajah Rammohun Roy, and of his successor Baboo Debendro Nath Tagore, the present leader of the Conservative party, Bramhoism was only a matter of belief—a fact of consciousness. Twenty-eight years had rolled on since the establishment of the Somaj, and many books and journals had been published expounding the doctrine of Bramhoism; but none of them had, up to the time of Keshub Chunder, contained a single word of practical Bramhoism. Since the leadership of Mr. Sen—which took place about twelve years ago—Bramhoism has been regenerated. It was originally a sort of Vedantism—which had retained its character for a long time—until the regeneration. Bramhoism has passed through an entire change, and it has also changed its stand point from the Vedas to the ground of Intuition. Bramhoism is no longer a religion of any particular man or book, but of God. During these twelve years it has wrought a wonderful change in the state of society, and the general state of progress which is so prominently observed in the East is owing to Bramhoism, of which Keshub Chunder Sen is the chief instrument. You shall hear from me again.

NETTLE MINDED.—No doubt there are some nettles in the world. There are unpleasant things, sad, hard things that tend to make life smart keenly. But we put far more nettles into the world than are there originally. The real nettles are ourselves, in our own uncomfortable, petulant, sour, selfish dispositions, and they spread their own character over nature.



THE OLD MEETING HOUSE, ABERDARE.

THE OLD MEETING HOUSE,
ABERDARE.

THIS congregation traces its origin to one that had met for public worship, no one knows how long, at a singularly out-of-the-way place, called Cwm-y-glo (Valley of the Coal), near Merthyr, whither a faithful few within a circuit of twenty miles had been accustomed to wend their way in obedience to the dictates of their conscience. The ruins of the old chapel are still visible. About the middle of the last century the old chapel was found too small and too inconvenient, which led to the erection of Caisnford, in 1747, of Ynysgau in 1749 (the latter became Independent about fifty years ago), which necessitated the erection of Twyn-yr-odin in 1821 (see "Monthly Repos." 1820, p. 559), and of the Old Meeting House, Aberdare, in 1751, or about fifty years before any other Dissenting place of worship in the parish. The first minister of the Old Meeting House was Owen Rees, father of the Rev. Josiah Rees, of Gallioner,* and grandfather of Owen Rees of the publishing firm, Longman, Rees, and Co., and of Dr. Thomas Rees, secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and editor of the Racovian Catechism, &c. A few hymns are all that remain of his literary labours, and there are many and good reasons for believing that in opinion he was an Arian. He died March 14th, 1768, aged fifty-one, and was succeeded for a short period only by one Edwards and David Evans. Of the former nothing is known, of the latter that he taught the Universal Father, was—

"From seeming evil, still educating good."

In 1772 Edward Evans, a member of the congregation, was ordained minister. The following is a copy of the certificate, written by Dr. Jenkins, tutor of the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen :

"We whose names are inscribed, ministers of the Gospel, testify that the Rev. Edward Evans has been recommended to the Grace of God, on his solemnly devoting himself to the whole work of the Christian ministry, this 1st day of July, 1772, by us

* J. R. started a fortnightly magazine March 3rd, 1770, which was discontinued Sept. 15th of same year for want of support. A writer in "St. James's" for November attributes the origin of Welsh periodical literature to David Owen, who was not born till 1795.

J. Jenkins, David Williams, Samuel Davies, Joseph Simmons, Philip Charles, Sim. Williams, Henry Thomas, Josiah Rees."

Mr. Evans had not received a collegiate education, but he was a man of good abilities, understood English well, and was the author of a volume of poetry, which went through several editions. He died June 21st, 1798, aged eighty-two, and was succeeded by a young man named John Davis, who had just left Carmarthen College. He was succeeded by David Oliver in 1803, Jonathan Jones in 1806, and Thomas Evans in 1811. Evans was born June 20th, 1766, of humble parents, in a country place called Capel St. Lilin, near Brechfa, Carmarthenshire. He received but little education, but he had that thirst for knowledge which is often better, and soon made himself a master of the English language, which opened to him "fresh fields and pastures new." He served for some time as a farm servant, afterwards learnt the trade of a weaver, which he continued to work at through life. Though brought up a Calvinist, he soon broke with them, and while yet a boy used to be called "Priestley Bach," or "Little Priestley;" but though intended as a reproach, he took a pride in it, and in after years when he had got married he called two of his sons, respectively, Joseph Priestley, and Theophilis Lindsey.* He was the means of getting a chapel erected in the neighbourhood of his birth, the banks of the Cothi. During his early years Europe was in a political ferment, and Evans took a strong liking for politics, wrote a good deal to the papers and denounced Pitt in no measured terms. During the stirring events of 1797 he made himself more conspicuous than ever. One day he visited the house of a poor woman who sold metheglin (mead), and while he was there quaffing the sweet beverage—the house being at the time full of company—singing and reciting became the order of the day. Evans took his turn, and recited some verses said to have been written by Lolo Morganwy (that same Lolo who is referred to by Southey in his Madoc), the fourth verse of which was considered treasonable. On the information of a Judas-like member of the company, and said also to be a deacon of his congre-

* With Mr. Lindsey he had some correspondence, and some of Mr. Lindsey's letters still remain about Aberdare.

gation, he was apprehended, tried before Judge Lloyd, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, with the extra punishment of the pillory, at Carmathen—that town where Bishop Farrar was burnt to death, March 30th, 1555, for holding that little children unbaptised could be saved. Mr. Evans published (1) a sermon giving his religious views, 1794; (2) a quarterly magazine, of which only three numbers appeared commencing 1795; (3) a translation of Lindsey's "Catechist," 1796; (4) of Dr. Franklin's "Poor Richard;" (5) of Elwall's trial, 1812; (6) of Priestley's "Appeal," 1812; (7) of Belsham on "Philosophical Necessity;" (8) a Welsh and English dictionary, composed while in prison; (9) a volume of hymns. When Richard Wright went on his missionary tour in Wales, Evans accompanied him, translating them and there the sermons into Welsh. Mr. Evans died June 29th, 1833, and in the following February was succeeded by John Jones, who continued minister to his death, December 19th, 1863. To the usual duties of the pulpit he added those of school-keeping. He published a sermon "On Death-bed Repentance;" (2) a first book for Sunday Schools; (3) a translation of Cogan's letter on the Trinity; (4) an exhortation to young men to turn to God; (5) on the sin against the Holy Ghost; (6) his brother's poetical work, "The Harp of Clattwr Vale;" 12 mo., 260 pp.; (7) an essay on the Sabbath; (8) a collection of ballads and hymns; (9) the testimony of the book of nature concerning God; (10) God and His works in accordance with His Word; (11) a series of letters on demons.

For some time previous to Mr. Jones' death, owing to failing health, his pulpit was supplied by his son, who became minister in January, 1864. The old chapel was taken down and rebuilt in 1862, at a cost of about £750, of which something more than £120 still remains unpaid. The congregation is composed chiefly of working people, and owing to the depression of trade, removals by emigration, death, and other causes, they have been able to do but little of late towards the liquidation of their debt.

"Christ, some one says, was human as we are. Well, then, for Christ, thou answerest, who can care?"

So answerest thou; but why not rather say, Was Christ a man like us? Ah! let us try. If we, then, too, can be such men as he."

THE VIOLET'S WORK.

THE sun had only just risen when little Freddy Weir opened his eyes, one bright spring morning, and jumping out of bed, ran to the window to discover what kind of weather it was. Being fully satisfied on that point, he dressed himself quickly, and having said his prayers, hurried down stairs and out into the garden.

At the lower end of it, near the bower, was his own little plot, which in summer time was very gay I can assure you; but just then the plants were only sprouting, excepting a few snowdrops and crocuses that had managed to spring up in spite of the snow, which, until lately, had covered the ground.

This morning Freddy ran straight down to his garden to count the flowers, and while stepping very carefully across some green leaves to look at one of the crocuses, he spied, to his great joy, drooping its little head, a violet.

It was the first he had seen since last summer, and, gleefully picking it, he laid it carefully in his hand, for fear any harm should befall it, and scampered back to the house again. So quickly did he run that he frightened all the little birds away to the trees that stood round the house.

He was almost breathless when he reached the house, and at the door of the breakfast room met his mamma.

"O, mamma!" he shouted, "look! a violet!"

"Yes," answered his mamma, "it is the first I have seen this year. The scent is delicious. Now, Freddy, what will you do with it, the first violet of the year?"

"O, mamma, I will wear it in my button-hole; it will look so pretty and smell so nicely."

"That would be rather selfish," said Mrs. Weir. "Cannot you think of a better use for it?"

"You shall have it, dear mamma," said Freddy.

"No," replied Mrs. Weir, "think again. There is a better use for it still."

"What! better than giving it to you, mamma?" Freddy said, looking grave. "I know, I will take it to poor Nelly," he shouted, joyously. "She cannot go out, you know, mamma. That is the best use for it; is it not?"

"Yes," answered his mamma, smiling; "but now come in to breakfast."

Not far from the house of Mr. Weir, Freddy's papa, stood a little cottage, where Mrs. Reynolds lived with her lame daughter Nelly. Mrs. Reynolds was a widow, and had to work hard to support herself and Nelly, whom she was frequently obliged to leave several hours alone.

Few cottages could be found so well kept and clean as the widow's; and a little garden in front of it was always free from weeds.

Nelly was about eleven years old, and had been a cripple since her babyhood; but her mother had taught her to read and knit, so that although she was entirely confined to the house, she was not without employment.

On the morning we have mentioned little Freddy, having finished his breakfast and obtained his mamma's permission, hastened down the lane to Mrs. Reynolds'. I dare say any one that passed him would notice that his hand was closed, and that he held it very carefully as though he had something precious in it. "Ah! we know the secret, though; it was the violet.

He opened the green gate and walked up the white footpath, white with broken cockle-shells—for it was not far from the sea-shore—up to the cottage door. Nelly was sitting at the window, longing to be out, poor child, when Freddy came in with his rosy face, which of itself was enough to cheer any one.

"Good morning, Nelly," he said; "see what I have brought you! It is the first we have seen this year."

You should have seen how Nelly's face brightened up when the violet appeared.

"O, thank you, thank you, Master Freddy!" she cried. "I am so much obliged to you. I do love violets so much. Now I shall smell it and talk to it when mother is away."

"How can you talk to a flower?" asked little Freddy, in astonishment.

"O, I can," answered Nelly. "It will tell me how good God is to me, to make me so happy; and when mother comes home she will be so pleased to see it."

"Well, good-bý, Nelly," he said, "I must go home to my lessons now;" and off he went accordingly.

Freddy felt very happy, for he had done a kind action. When he reached home he said:—

"Mamma, I am very glad I took the

violet to Nelly, instead of wearing it in my button-hole. She looked so pleased when I gave it to her."

"Yes, my dear," replied his mamma, "so am I. The violet has certainly done its work; it has made three people happy in its short life."

"Three people! How mamma?"

"It made Nelly happy, I think; did it not? It made me happy by telling me that my little son is trying not to be selfish; and I think the consciousness of having done a good and kind act has made Freddy happy, too. Is it not so?"

It would be a pleasant thing if little children always did their work equally well with the violet.—*Exchange.*

CLERICAL HERO-WORSHIP.

Of all heroes whom Mr. Carlyle describes as objects of worship we think there is none to whom that worship is so prejudicial as the clerical hero. The warrior, the statesman, or the poet, may eagerly drink in the incense of flattery in his youth, while the laurels are fresh on his brow; but if his glory is not owing to mere chance—if he has in him the elements of true greatness—he wearis of it soon. Flattery palls upon his taste, as a surfeit of honey on the natural palate, and he ceases to be affected by it as he advances in years. But we cannot call to mind a case in which a churchman was deified without detriment to his moral nature. There is something in the profession—we mean no disrespect towards it—which fosters spiritual pride. Some otherwise fine, noble natures have, in all ages, been corrupted and spoiled by the practice of hero-worship, a practice still existing in our own day, though in a milder form than was once the custom. We reverence our clergy, we set them on a pedestal, if not to be worshipped, at least to act as an edifying example; but they must pay the penalty of greatness. If they ever for a moment prove forgetful of the exalted rôle they have got to play woe betide them. We are terribly severe on our divinities when we discover them to be no more than ordinary mortals—almost always unjustly so—for is it not we ourselves who have exalted and deified them? And if they had honestly protested against deification would we have heeded them?

Would we not rather have attributed their protests to an excessive modesty ?

Surely we have been dealing unfairly with our clergy. We have a standard of perfection for them which we do not dream of living up to ourselves. "No harm in itself, but unbecoming in a clergyman," is a phrase often heard among laymen who allow themselves a considerable latitude; as if clergymen were not made of the same flesh and blood as other men, and had not the feelings of their kind. We have heard young ministers confess their desire to partake of the amusements of the laity, and that they were only restrained by what Mrs. Grundy would say. After a while they learn to fit themselves to the character that is assigned them, and to control the expression of their feelings. The broad line that severs the life of the pastor from that of his flock in a manner isolates him. He is set on a pinnacle above them. "The fierce light that beats upon a throne" falls with more pitiless force on the pulpit. With the eyes of the people upon him he must walk very circumspectly. The least deviation to the right hand or to the left would be fatal—one false step, no matter how slight, and he will never recover his equilibrium. Is it not natural, then, that he, being a human being, and not a demigod, should try to indemnify himself for the straitlaced life he is obliged to lead by taking what his flock willingly give—the homage paid to superior wisdom, piety, and virtue—even though his heart may tell him he does not deserve such homage? When a man finds himself accredited with certain attributes, it is difficult for him, however honest he may be, to dispel the illusion. If we put upon him the character of saintliness he cannot choose but wear it, even though it must sometimes be slightly interwoven with hypocrisy. We always speak of a soldier as the gallant captain or colonel, of a lawyer as the learned counsel, and of a clergyman as pious, as if these attributes could be donned like an official dress. But we know that all clergymen are not equally impressed with the solemn duties of their office, though all must appear so to be. Now, this necessity of appearing, even in a slight degree, what they are not, is demoralising, particularly in connection with religion. We are all prone enough to make ourselves ~~neen~~ to

the best advantage, without having to maintain the reputation of a saint. What people will say, in such cases, is apt to take the place of conscience as a guide through life.

There is another matter in which it strikes me the pastor's lot is a hard one. We make him carry our burdens continually, while he never asks or receives help in return; he must bear all uncomplainingly. We demand his presence as a right wherever sickness, or death, or trouble is. His feelings are harrowed by scenes of sorrow and tales of misery. To the sufferers it is his duty to administer consolation. His own soul may be sick within him; he may be bowed down with some bitter grief, or wrestling with some fierce temptation, for he has no preservative against the ills which his flock endure. But we never think of him as a suffering fellow mortal. We demand of him unbounded sympathy, but we offer none in return. This is the natural consequence of deification. We imagine our hero or saint superior to all weak emotions. Surely he must sometimes long to step down off his pedestal and exchange the reverence of the people for a little human brotherly love and sympathy! When we take into consideration the way in which the female portion of Christendom deports itself towards its pastors we are constrained to wonder how little harm it has done, and to admire the honest simplicity of character which, to a great extent, has been proof against the incense of flattery so lavishly poured out at its shrines. But the power of praise is great, no one can be quite insensible to it. Every man has his weak points. It is not enough that he has to fight against it in his own heart, without also having to struggle against the evil influences of his admirers—worshippers, perhaps, would be as correct a term—who are constantly impeding his usefulness and damaging his zeal.

A certain class of ladies—we are sorry to say a very numerous class—when a young minister comes among them set about destroying in him the very qualities they profess to admire. Is he active and zealous-given to visit the poor? They will tell him he must take more care of his precious health, and try to lure him to pleasant idleness. Is he self-forgetful? They will make him egotistical by con-

stantly talking about him. Is he modest and unpretending? They will make him conceited by praising his abilities and his goodness, and putting themselves under his spiritual direction. Now we are of opinion that the influences of good a pastor in forming the minds of young people cannot be overrated; his lessons leave an impression which can hardly ever be completely obliterated. But surely grown men and women know right from wrong, and ought to be their own conscience-keepers. There is something at once melancholy and ludicrous in the idea of a staid, sensible matron consulting a young curate on some trifling matter of which she ought to be a better judge herself. I am not now speaking of the vulgar overtures of a certain class of young ladies who have matrimony as an ultimate object, and who pelt the unfortunate curate with slippers and muffetees if he be Low Church, and with altar cloths, *pries dieux*, and embroidered crosses if he be High Church. They are vexatious, but not so dangerous to the soul's welfare as the sentimental devotees, who really regard their pastor with a feeling of adoration which ought not to be accorded to any man.

Of course there are subjects on which it is natural and right to consult a clergyman: when one feels disposed to unburden one's mind on a matter of great importance to a friend whose good sense and discretion can be relied upon—particularly if the subject touches religion. Once in my life I found myself in such a case. Bewildered by doubts which were constantly suggesting themselves to my mind, and which I had long struggled against in vain, I felt sorely in need of help and advice, but I was not on terms of intimacy with any clergyman whom I esteemed a safe guide. In this dilemma I called to mind, with fond regret, the minister who had instructed me in early youth, and whom I had not seen for seven years. I determined to visit his church and hear him preach. When I stood once more within the hallowed walls where all my religious impressions had been imbibed, and heard the familiar voice of my revered pastor, which had haunted me reproachfully of late, the intervening years faded away, and it seemed as if it were yesterday that I had stood before the altar to release my sponsors of their charge, and knelt, awe struck,

to receive the bishop's blessing. Foolish, happy child! I felt the sacred touch of the episcopal hand imparted virtue to the soul, and I revered my pastor as God's delegate, to question whose authority on matters spiritual were a deadly sin.

Nothing was changed since then. The pretty little church looked the same. The same old sexton showed me to the pew where I sat in my childhood, the great elm tree throwing its shadow across the open doorway, which admitted the perfume of roses, hawthorn, and sweetbriar. The evening sun, pouring its rays through the stained window, fell upon the old oak pulpit, the open book, and the minister's bowed head, and lit them all up with crimson, and purple, and gold, as I had often seen it in the days of old. The preacher himself was unchanged, except that he looked a little older. The same clear, ringing voice, with a melancholy cadence in it, suggestive of some secret sorrow; the same warm, earnest address, particularly directed to the young, for whom, I remembered well, he ever had the greatest affection. As I sat listening I wondered how it was that he could still be eloquent on the old themes, and that his zeal had not burned out—like mine. But he was the same as when I knew him long ago, before I had learned to think for myself, and when I rendered a blind obedience to his authority. Happy time! what would I not give now that those burning words could kindle a like enthusiasm in my heart, that the eloquent preacher could inspire me with the simple, unquestioning faith with which I once received his lessons. I felt like one who had cut loose from a sure and safe anchorage, discontented with the narrowness of the surrounding prospect, and impatient to see the world, and was drifting away without a pilot on an unknown sea. Once more in sight of a harbour of refuge, should I try to enter? Would I ask my pastor to take charge of my soul again, and give up my conscience to his keeping? "No," answered conscience; "you shall not throw off the burden of me on another's shoulders, he has enough to bear already; he is but a man, liable to err as you are. It is appointed that every one shall bear his own burdens. You must think for yourself." "I am weary of thinking," I reply. "How long shall I be tossed on the stormy

sea of doubt? May I not grasp a friendly hand to help me to the shore?" I listened for the still small voice, but it was silent.

I sought an interview with my former pastor. He received me kindly; but the awe with which, in spite of his gentle manners, he had always inspired me, returned when I found myself face to face with him, and I did not know how to tell him that I had fallen away from his teaching. While I hesitated he spoke; "You want something of me, my friend?"

"Yes, your advice," I replied, deeply agitated; "you will probably think that I ought to apply to my present pastor; but the truth is I have none, I am a wandering sheep, and have strayed from one pasture to another, but found no resting place. Yet I cannot ask you to take me into your fold, for I am not sure that I would be content with its limits."

"To drop metaphor, your opinions have undergone a change?" said the grave pastor, raising his eyes and looking at me searchingly.

"Yes; that is, I do not feel quite so sure of—of things that I once believed in with all my heart."

He withdrew his eyes and looked at the carpet for several minutes. "How can I help you," he said at last. "In your youth I taught you the doctrines of our Church, and if your mature judgment rejects them, what can I do for you?" His words were cold, but there was no tone of reproach or surprise in them, as I expected. "You have been reading Colenso and the 'Essays and Reviews,' I suppose," he continued. "It is the fashion now to be a little heterodox."

There was such an evident sneer in this remark that I replied somewhat offended. "I hope, sir, you don't think my doubts have their origin in a wicked affection? I came to you in hope of having them dissipated, and I never spoke of them to anyone else."

"You were right, quite right, my dear friend," said the minister, with a sudden cordiality; "do not speak of them to anyone. I see you are sincere, and I would help you if I could. You are not a child now to receive my weak words with un-questioning faith; you must think for yourself. But if there is any particular subject on which I could throw light I

would be delighted," he added with earnest sympathy.

"Answer me one question," I said eagerly; "you cannot help knowing and reading the new theories of some eminent men upon subjects which we considered as firmly fixed as the stars in the firmament. Tell me, then, how have you preserved your faith unshaken?"

The minister started back in confusion. Then leaning his head on his hand, and looking at me earnestly, he said, in a low, agitated voice, "How do you know that I have preserved my faith unshaken?"

It was my turn to start now. "It is not possible that you?—I never heard you preach more earnestly in the old days than you did to-day."

"In the old days," he repeated, "my struggles had then begun. You little knew what I was then suffering. My mind was torn with doubts and difficulties; my conscience racked with remorse. I could not decide that my religion was worthless, and resign my office; nor could I cling to it with that perfect faith which is necessary for a minister of the Gospel to profess. But I was resolved on one thing: while in the Church to teach its doctrines pure as I had received them; and I did it. Sometimes it seemed a cold and hollow mockery to me, and at others a sort of wild zeal, born of remorse, used to seize me. My congregation admired it, and lauded me, and I hated myself as a hypocrite. It was not cowardice that kept me silent, for I would have had sympathisers enough, but the terrible responsibility of disturbing the faith of the young people who looked to me for guidance. If I withdrew the spiritual food that they had learned to prize, I had nothing to offer in its stead. And so I drifted on in uncertainty. The mental struggles I underwent told on my health and appearance. My kind flock pitied me, and said I was wearing myself out with hard work. I fought out the terrible fight alone and unaided, as you must do, my friend. You must look to God alone for guidance, for all human props are weak and false. Do not pin your faith to any man or set of men. You are shocked at my confession, I see; but I intended you should be. I have only one word of advice to give you. Keep your doubts

secret. No one will be benefited by them; many might be injured. If my faith was not firmly fixed now I would not have told you of my former struggles. I am glad now I kept it all to myself. Do you the same; and when you have come to any definite conclusion let me know. I will pray for you."

When the door of the parson's study closed after me I felt indeed that I must no longer look for human help to take me out of my difficulties. My friend has long been numbered with the dead, and I have lived to prove the truth of his assertion that to pin one's faith to any man is but to prepare disappointment for oneself. Who would be a follower of a Paul or an Apollos if we knew what was going on in the minds of our Pauls and Apolloses, and how difficult they find it to keep right themselves? It would be better for all parties if we would accept the fact that clergymen are not, and cannot always be in the right; that they will err sometimes like other men; and that it is unreasonable to withdraw all confidence from them when we find they are not immaculate. The noblest and best men the world ever saw were far from faultless; but are we, therefore, to underrate their services to humanity, or disbelieve in their virtues? An eminent writer, in speaking of that great, noble-hearted, but not faultless reformer, Savonarola, said:—"It was the fashion of old, when an ox was led out to sacrifice to Jupiter, to chalk the dark spots, and give the offering a false show of unblemished whiteness. Let us fling away the chalk, and boldly say, The victim is spotted; but it is not, therefore, in vain that his mighty heart is laid on the altar of men's highest hopes."

LIFT UP THY VOICE.—A correspondent writes us: I am glad to see that at last Unitarians are throwing off that inertia which, since the days of Priestley, has made them like dumb dogs suffering derision, and scorn, and insult without a murmur. Our holy faith has been denounced as infidel, and in most cases no voice has been raised outside or inside our chapel walls against those charges. Now let our voice be heard in the street, and lane, and town, and village, that the calumny and superstition may be heard no more.

GOD IS LIGHT.

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."—I. John i. 5.

O why should children of the day,
Creatures of light and love,
With mystery and darkness stay,
And all their light remove?

The opening heavens invite their gaze
On wonders rich and new;
Nature her loveliness displays,
To their admiring view.

The works of our Almighty King,
Of every varied grade,
With them unnumbered blessings bring,
Blessings which ne'er shall fade.

Open thine eyes, then, child of man,
Survey this wondrous scene,
These everlasting glories scan,
Where God in all is seen.

No more in cloistered shades remain,
Where not a glimpse of light,
The darkened soul can e'er obtain,
To chase its dreary night.

But wide unfold the prison gates
Which bar thy captive mind,
A world of unknown treasures waits,
And all who seek may find.

Glories which never dimly shine,
But rich with splendours glow,
In heaven-born excellence combine,
Their Maker's love to show.

How high soe'er thou wing'st thy flight,
How deep soe'er thou dive,
To screen thee from this holy light,
'Tis vain for thee to strive.

But spread thy wings and nobly strive
To gain some greater joy:
In wisdom's golden mine to dive,
That were a blest employ.

The gilded canopy of heaven,
Illum'd with love and peace,
To all who thirst for bliss is given,
Their blessings to increase.

Earth in her many hues arrayed,
Ocean with treasures deep,
The cedar tall, the humble blade,
All things that fly or creep.

These various stores are all prepared
Child of the earth, for thee;
No joy thy bounteous Sire hath spared,
No comfort held from thee!

Wisdom and knowledge too are thine,
Thy thirsty soul to fill,
Celestial riches all divine,
To feed thy spirit still.

Then chase the mist and gloom away,
Which death and error wrought,
Henceforth behold the cheerful day—
The light thou long hast sought.

ELIZA HADDOCK.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

SUPERSTITION.—Bishop Thomson says he saw in India a religious devotee sitting cross-legged on sharp stones, who had sat there for seven years, under the belief that mental and physical suffering would improve his spiritual condition.

PROSTRATION TO THE POPE.—One of the old companions of Theodore Parker, now a Roman Catholic (Brownson), makes the following strange declaration:—"If the Pope should declare an oath imposed by the Constitution contrary to the divine law, I could not in conscience take it; or if the Legislature should pass a law, and the Pope should declare that what it required of me is forbidden by the law of God, I could not obey it."

DESIROUS OF DAMNATION.—To some hard and wild natures the doctrine even of damnation is more attractive than salvation, for they easily transfer the wrath of heaven to some foe and enjoy the thought of his future suffering. When the Rev. John Murray began, about one hundred years ago, to proclaim the universal love of God, and multitudes went to hear him, one person who had an enemy in the village objected to Murray's doctrine, "for," said he, "I cannot accept any doctrine that won't damn John Brown."

FLAW-PICKERS.—There are people (do not imitate them!) who, if they hear an organ, find out at once which are the poorest stops. If they listen to a great speaker they remember nothing but some slip in the construction of a sentence, or break in the consistency of a metaphor, or flaw in the evolutions of an argument. While their friends are admiring the wealth and beauty of a tree whose branches are weighed down with fruit, they have discovered a solitary bough, lost in the golden affluence, on which nothing is hanging.

A SOLITARY SUFFERER.—A solitary sufferer was Rev. Jonathan Bowman, minister in Dorchester, from 1730 to 1773. After forty years of faithful service he had trouble, and was accused, among other things, of preaching too short sermons. He stoutly defended himself, asserting that he spoke fast, and could deliver as much in fifteen minutes as some would in half an hour; but it was of no use; his people would have full measure. Since his day we are not aware that any clergyman has been called to account for a like offence.

SILENCING A UNITARIAN CROAKER.—"No," said Pompous Littleheart, "we can have no more Unitarian places of worship in our town till the present chapel is filled and overflowing." "That was what your relations said twenty-five years ago in the town of —, and now they have none." Learn, my dear fellow, from history, and learn from nature. "An apple tree shook its blossoms upon the earth, and made it bright and beautiful; and yet the tree was not impoverished, but soon replenished its branches with fruit it could not have produced had it retained the blossoms."

CAPITAL HITTING.—Once upon a time, says the narrator, Lyman Beecher and Hosea Ballou met to compare Calvinism and Universalism.

Both were Bible men, and came armed with textual missiles. After several apostolic blows from each, shrewdly parried by the other, Dr. Beecher opened to the ninth Psalm and read, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." "There, sir, the wicked are in hell; get them out if you can!" Hosea Ballou, calm as a summer morning, pointed to the twentieth chapter of John's Revelation, and read "Death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." "There," said Father Ballou, "they are out; get them in again if you can."

SOMETHING MORE THAN NATURE.—We want something more than Nature, about which some talk so eloquently; something more than the far-off heavens and the distant stars—something more than the sunlight kissing the tulip and the dewdrop bathing its lips or glittering in its cups—something more than the telescope that reveals the mystery of the nebula or the belts of Orion, and the Pleiades, to satisfy the soul of bereavement or hungering and thirsting after righteousness. That something we find in the New Testament: and nowhere more than in the prayer of all prayers, "Our Father which art in heaven;" or in that story of all stories, the story of the Prodigal Son.

THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS.—The Positivists have here met with quite as much success as they could have expected, and perhaps more. Their leaders are untiring and zealous men, and they have managed to influence thought indirectly, but to a very great extent, through many channels. They hold their weekly meetings, at which, I believe, there is always an attendance of men who do not yet call themselves Positivists, but who are certainly attracted toward that system—Lord Amberley, for instance, is one of these. The present "Pontiff" of the sect here, is, I believe, Mr. Congreve, and among its "high priests" are Mr. Frederic Harrison, Prof. Huxley, Prof. Beesley, &c. At present the Positivist leaders direct much attention toward the working classes, and their doctrines do find some acceptance among the working men. But they will be disowned by these as soon as they venture to explain to the working-man that under the Positivist he is to be governed and is not to govern, and that the present idol which he worships, Parliamentary government, is to be set aside for the reign of priesthood in the selection of which he is to have no choice.—James Martineau.

THE following are the terms for supplying the
CHRISTIAN FREEMAN, post free:—

1 copy	...	...	per year	2s. 6d.
2 copies	...	...	"	4 0
5 copies	...	...	"	6 0

Above this number at the same rate.

Communications for the Editor to be addressed to the Rev. R. SPEARS, 56, Grosvenor Park, Camberwell, London, S.E., and all Business Letters to EDWARD T. WHITFIELD, 178, Strand, London.